

Emergency appeal №: MDRVU011 Emergency appeal launched: 29/10/2023 Operational Strategy published: 10/11/2023	Glide №: TC-2023-000207-VUT
Operation update: #2 Date of issue: 5/1/2024	Timeframe covered by this update: From 29/10/2023 to 08/12/2023
Operation timeframe: 14 months (29/10/2023 - 31/12/2024)	Number of people being assisted: 30,000
Funding requirements (CHF): CHF 2.5 million through the IFRC Emergency Appeal CHF 2.7 million Federation-wide	DREF amount initially allocated: CHF 750,000

To date, this Emergency Appeal, which seeks CHF 2,500,000, is 23 per cent funded, excluding the IFRC-DREF Loan. Further funding contributions are needed to enable the Vanuatu Red Cross Society, with the support of the IFRC, to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the cyclone affected people in Vanuatu.



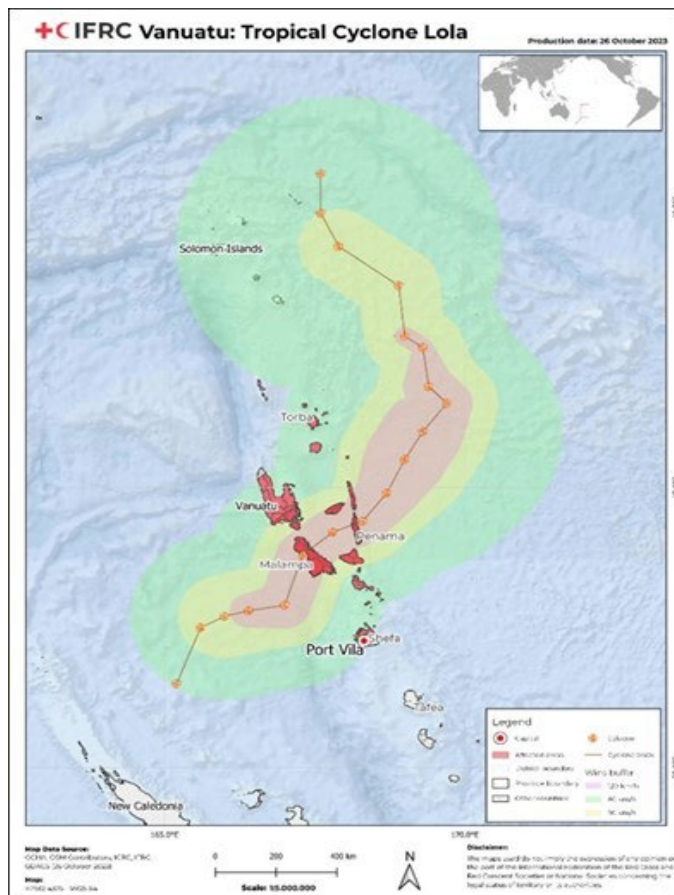
Vanuatu Red Cross volunteer conducts assessment of affected families in Central Pentecost 1 in Penama province. *(Photo Credit: Vanuatu Red Cross Society)*

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the crisis

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Lola made landfall on the eastern shores of Maewo and Pentecost islands of Vanuatu on the night of 25 October 2023 as a Category 4 storm, with winds of 205 kph. There were heavy rainfalls and flash flooding in low-lying areas and near riverbanks, causing coastal flooding. On 27 October, the Government of Vanuatu declared a state of emergency for Torba, Penama, Malampa, Shefa and Sanma provinces, to be in effect for six months. This period also covers the upcoming cyclone season, which shows an elevated risk of tropical cyclones across the region this year according to the Vanuatu Meteorological & Geo-hazard Department.

The initial estimates on affected people are available in the [Operations Update #1](#). According to the estimated figures from the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), out of 110,000 people exposed to the cyclone, 91,000 people were directly affected. The NDMO categorized prioritization of assistance by the track path of the cyclone, magnitude of damage (from the satellite images, initial information / assessment / observation) and the estimated number of affected people. The most affected islands in the Priority 1 were Ambrym, Malekula, and Paama in Malampa Province; Ambae, Maewo and Pentecost in Penama Province; Epi in Shefa Province, and Merelava in Torba Province. It is estimated that near to 60,000 people in total were affected in Priority 1 areas. The actual number of affected people is now considered to be lower, but no official figures have been finalized.











Summary of response

Overview of the host National Society and ongoing response

The Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS) is the largest humanitarian organization in Vanuatu, recognized by a parliamentary Act. Established in 1982, the VRCS operates independently as a non-governmental organization, collaborating with national authorities in disaster response. It maintains strong ties with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), is a member of the National Disaster Council, and collaborates with various disaster response entities at national, provincial, area council and community level.

VRCS has a long history of building community resilience towards disaster risk reduction, through collaboration with national authorities and partnerships, training volunteers in key areas, and maintaining a decentralized structure with branches and sub-branches. The organization has a dedicated Emergency Response Team, co-leads the national Shelter Cluster in support of NDMO as lead agency, and actively engages with Shelter, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), and Health clusters to enhance disaster management efforts.





				<p>VRCS has six branches and four sub-branch offices and one warehouse facility at NHQ with some containers for relief items kits storage. VRCS have three different response team, Emergency Response Team (ERT), National Response Team (NRT), and Pacific Response Team (PRT).</p> <p>Volunteers are trained in DRR, shelter, first aid, health, and hygiene promotion. More additional warehouse and containers are needed at both national headquarters and branch levels.</p>
	ERT	NERT	PERT	
	120	15	15	
				
Volunteer	CVA	SHELTER	1st Aid	
361	20	56	100	

VRCS Response

On 26 October 2023, following the announcement by the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) that the cyclone had passed through Vanuatu and that it was safe to travel outside to the affected areas, the VRCS immediately deployed to complete assessments while simultaneously carrying out initial relief distributions with existing stock (emergency shelter assistance, essential household items, and hygiene kits). Both a household level and community level needs assessment are being completed and should be finalized in January 2024. The household level assessment gathers basic information on household composition, reflecting disaggregated data and taking specific account of Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) considerations. The community level assessment gathers information across sectors to identify gaps requiring further follow-up.

As co-lead of the National Shelter Cluster, the VRCS assisted the NDMO in mapping out the Shelter response strategy as part of the broader NDMO TC Lola National Response strategy and ensured that VRCS were in coordination with other participating agencies in the distribution of relief efforts.

Following the development and approval of the Operational Strategy, VRCS worked closely with the IFRC to establish an initial budget based on current available funding. Replenishing stocks was considered a high priority, and an order of essential relief items was placed to take advantage of a pro-bono air freight offer from Airlink (see quantities in **Table 2**). The remaining amount of currently available funds is required to cover the committed costs of finalizing the ongoing distribution (volunteer insurance, compiling assessment data, transport, and logistics).

Shelter	Health	PGI	WASH
			
14,605 People	5,230 People	8,555 People	8,475 People
Reached through 3,992 Tarpaulins, 1,359 Shelter tool kit, 2,715 Sleeping Mats, 1,160 Kitchen Sets, 3,525 Blankets	Reached with 1,046 Mosquito nets	Reached with 1,711 Solar lights	Reached with 2,921 Jerry Cans and 1,695 Hygiene Kits

As of 30 November 2023, all the VRCS prepositioned stocks and initial NDMO stocks allotted to VRCS were distributed. The stocks included 3,992 tarpaulins, 1,359 shelter tool kits, 1,160 kitchen sets, 2,715 sleeping mats, 1,711 solar lights, 3,525 blankets, 1,046 mosquito nets, 1,695 hygiene kit and 2,921 jerry cans reaching in total over 3,000 households with all the distributions. Alongside the relief distributions, safe shelter, hygiene, and health messaging were also shared in communities during the distributions.

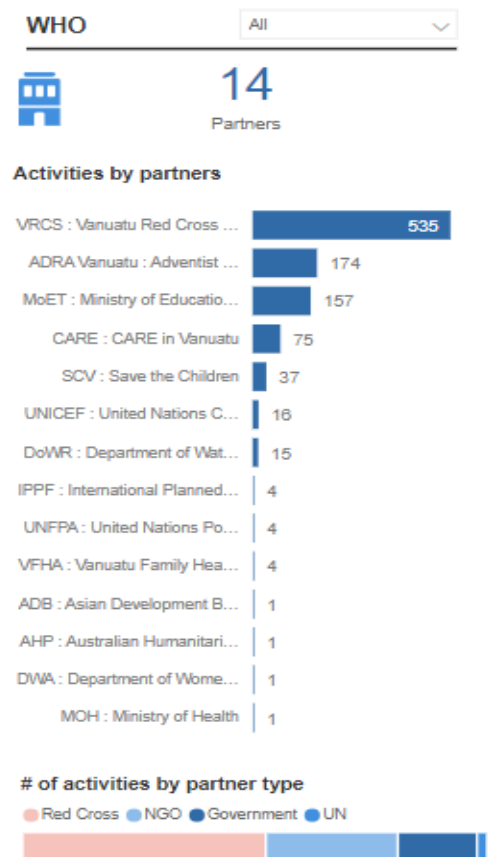
More detailed assessment data on household composition and community level impact is being compiled by VRCS. Initial assessments from VRCS indicate that CVA is feasible and appropriate as the supporting infrastructure such as Financial Service Provider coverage, market system, and marketplace are operational, and community in Penama Province are commonly using cash for their daily transaction. American Red Cross have indicated to provide support for CVA implementation to cover 2,000 HHs in Penama Province for Multipurpose Cash Assistance and the process of finalization of the commitment is currently underway.

National Response

The NDMO is the operational arm of the Disaster Risk management framework and as such leads the response at the national level through the activation of the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC). During emergency responses when a State of Emergency is declared, the National Controller assumes a higher position than the NEOC. The NDMO is tasked with ensuring the formulation and implementation of response plans. To support the national government's preparedness and response efforts, Vanuatu has adopted a cluster system, where each cluster is led by a ministry of the national government and co-led by correspondent INGO and the Vanuatu Red Cross Society, with IFRC support.

The [TC Lola dashboard by NDMO](#) gives an overview of the activities recorded to date in response to TC Lola by the 23 registered partners. VRCS has reached by far the most affected people out of the active agencies so far, calculated by the number of distribution activities carried out.

Since the last Operations Update, there has been very limited activity organised by the NDMO and most meetings have been cancelled.



Needs analysis

Needs analysis

Communities are actively rebuilding and reconstructing roads, helping other families in need, and working fast to fix their family shelters. VRCS has been carrying out both household level and community damage and needs assessments in the first weeks of the operation. The household level assessment gathers basic information on household composition, reflecting disaggregated data and taking specific account of PGI considerations. The community level assessment gathers information across sectors to identify gaps requiring further follow-up. Data from both assessments is currently being input and collated following the distribution. The results will be reported in the next VRCS Sitrep.

Shelter and Settlements

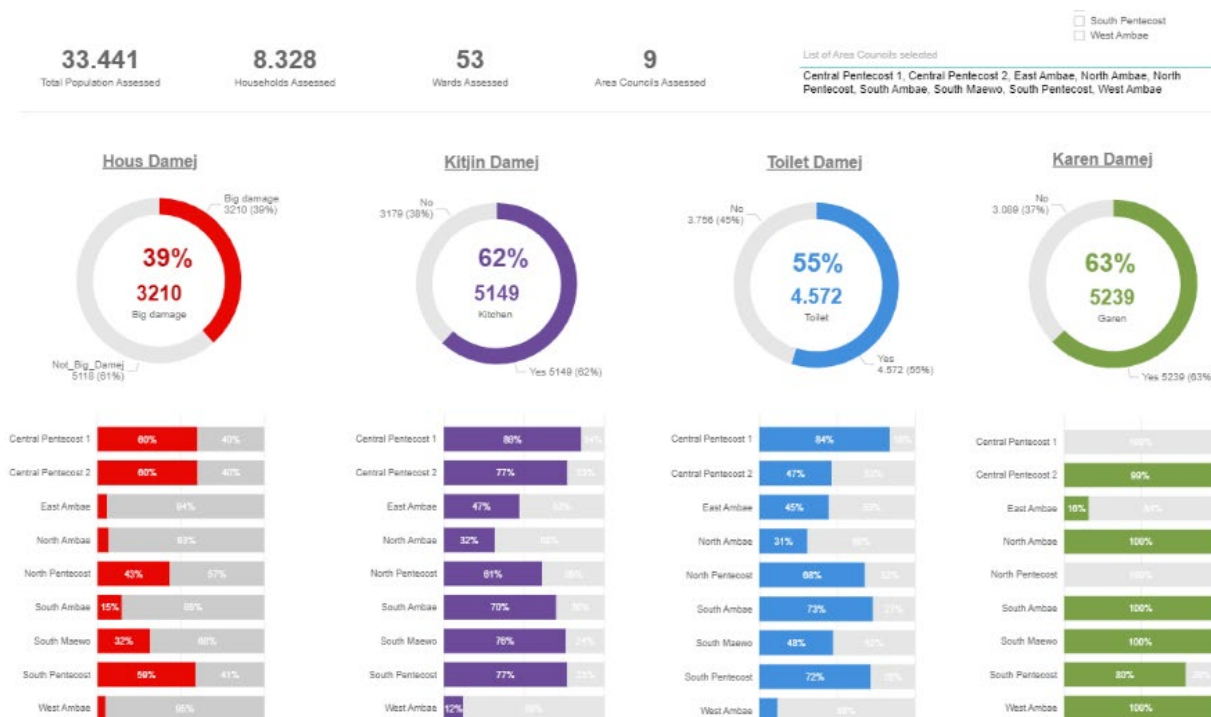
According to the National response plan that was shared by NDMO on 14 November 2023, a total of 12,618 households were estimated to be in need of shelter assistance, as per initial assumptions on 75 per cent of impact in Priority 1 areas and 50 percent in Priority 2 areas. However, assessment data shared after its publication and the confirmation from shelter cluster coordination team and partners present on the affected provinces showed that those numbers were lower.

An estimated of 7,663 HHs needed emergency shelter assistance as per agreement in the shelter cluster coordination meeting convened on 8 November 2023.

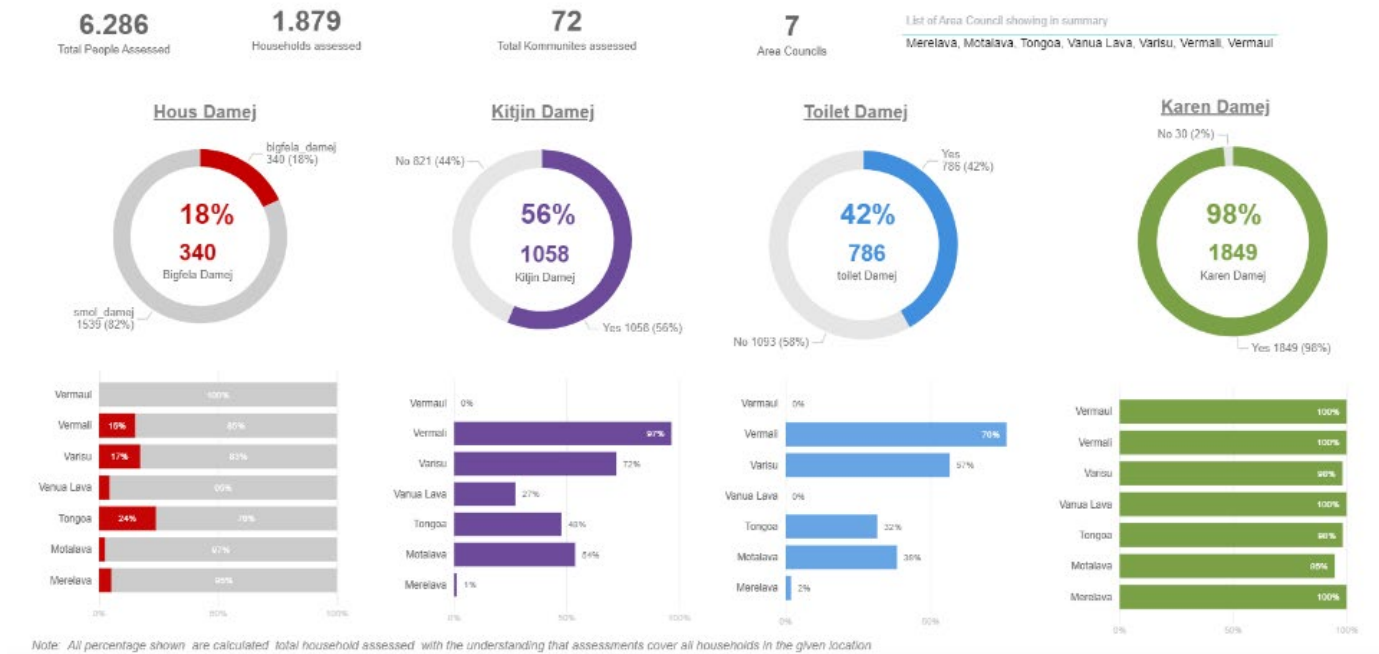
NDMO Priority Areas	Shelter Cluster priority areas (SCV meeting on 8 Nov)	Estimated #HH in need of shelter	Estimated #HH with destroyed house	Estimated #HH with damaged house
Priority 1	TOTAL shelter priority 1	5,331	3,303	2,028
Priority 1	TOTAL shelter priority 2	1,940	372	1,568
Priority 2	TOTAL shelter priority 3	392	78	314
TOTAL		7,663	3,753	3,910

The NDMO TC Lola assessment dashboard which includes the data for community assessments in Penama, Shefa and Torba Provinces, shows a total of 3,550 HHs with destroyed houses. Malampa province is not included in the dashboard:

1) PENAMA PROVINCE



2) SHEFA AND TORBA PROVINCE

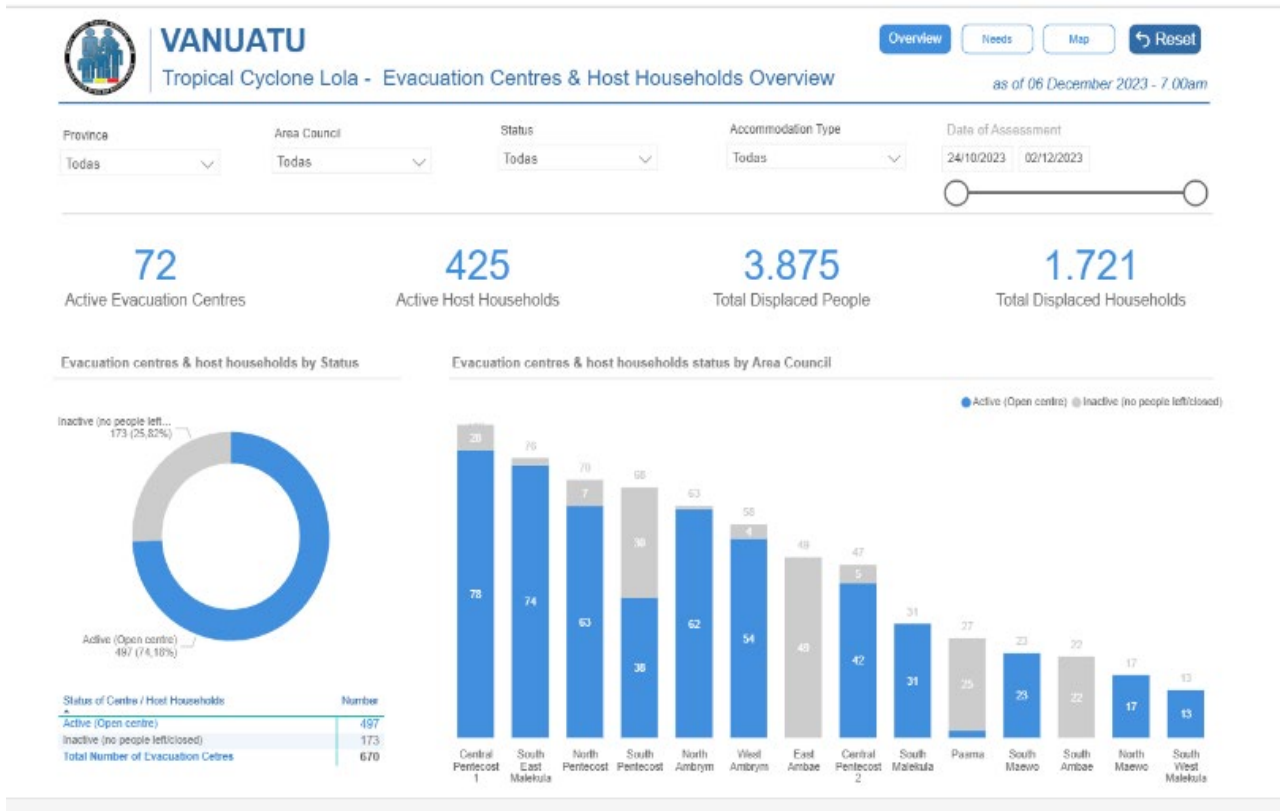


While data from VRCS assessment is still being consolidated, it is almost completed for VRCS area of intervention in Malampa province, showing 477 (13%) of the Households with the house totally destroyed and 1,249 (36%) with small damage.

Location	Total HH	%HH assessed	#HH with destroyed house	#HH with minor damaged house	# HH with destroyed kitchen
Malampa	3,451	85%	13%	36%	46%
Ambrym					
Southeast	542	99%	57 (11%)	158 (29%)	380 (70%)
West	669	72%	44 (7%)	382 (57%)	64 (10%)
Malekula					
Southwest	895	84%	119 (13%)	291 (33%)	119 (47%)
Southeast	1,345	87%	257 (19%)	418 (31%)	257 (53%)

VRCS has already completed the distributions with the stock in country, covering the most urgent and lifesaving needs of the population at household level in their areas of interventions, regarding emergency shelter items. VRCS is coordinating closely with partners to identify and find ways to address the uncovered shelter needs of the households that remain in the active evacuation centers among the affected provinces, as per Displacement and Evacuation Center Management Cluster (DECM) Dashboard.

3) NDMO TC Lola Evacuation Centers & Host Households Overview



VRCS Shelter Officer and IFRC Shelter Cluster Coordinator surge support visited Pentecost Island communities and confirmed that after 5 weeks from the landfall, most of the families has already rebuilt their shelter using salvaged materials combined with the tarpaulins distributed. However, the need to support all targeted families and affected communities in general, with tailored Build back safer orientation and awareness remains urgent, to ensure that the houses rebuilt are safe and strong enough, and that people are not exposed to higher risks than before, especially considering the ongoing cyclone season.

Traditional construction in the northern provinces, and particularly in that island, uses *natangura* leaves for thatch roofs, TC Lola destroyed most of the trees, and it takes 3 to 4 years to grow again, therefore close consultation with affected communities and coordination with all stakeholders, will be essential in trying to identify alternative materials or solutions to adequately address the issue.

Livelihoods and basic needs

A quick assessment and feedback from the community indicate that there will be enough food for the coming weeks. Fishing and the market for fresh garden vegetables are major drivers of the island's economy. Vegetable and crop seedlings need to be replanted quickly to be able to start producing food sources in the coming months. The Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) is coordinating with partners around the utilization of available resources to assist affected areas immediately.

WASH

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are problems with the water supply due to contamination from saltwater. Water catchment and community tanks are necessary in many areas to ensure access to clean water. The affected population is more vulnerable to water-borne diseases due to the absence of a safe drinking water source. Rebuilding

damaged restrooms is a top priority for affected households in order to maintain good cleanliness and reduce strain on the healthcare system.

Health

Health concerns exist due to the limitations on food and safe water. To date, VRCS is not aware of diarrheal outbreaks. However, this risk is considered high, and outbreaks are expected due to the lack of safe water. Skin diseases/infections are already being reported due to use of the contaminated water sources for washing. Anecdotal evidence suggests there is a shortage of medical supplies and medications as delivery is still hindered by poor transportation access. This cyclone, as well as the TC Judy & Kevin earlier in 2023, has resulted in food insecurity for affected communities. There is a baseline of poor nutritional status in some of the population of Vanuatu, and the reduced access to local crops and foods can exacerbate malnutrition. In 2024, the VRCS will be supported by UNICEF to complete Nutritional Assessments in affected communities, allowing for identification of malnourished individuals and referrals to clinics and treatment where necessary.

PGI, CEA

PGI considerations is continued throughout the response.

Operational risk assessment

The risk outlook and analysis remain similar to the previous Operational Update. The continued delay in finalizing the arrival of the pro-bono Air Freight means that activities planned to cover gaps are not able to move forward, and VRCS warehouses remain empty, without replenishment, in the middle of a predicted intense cyclone season, which poses a major risk in the event of a cyclone.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Political instability in country, risk of parliament being dissolved, and new elections called which may politicize the national humanitarian assistance planning	High	Medium	VRCS HQ will work with branches to reinforce principled approach to beneficiary selection and delivering assistance.
Logistics and availability of stocks in country	High	High	The costs of air and sea transport as well as available capacity restrict the availability to provide cash and stocks to the affected areas. Planning ahead to avoid urgent requirements for movements as well as close collaboration with other agencies and partners on provided transport will contain expenses and allow proper facilitation of required movements.
Staff and Volunteers Safety	Medium	High	VRCS and IFRC will provide training and equipment to staff and volunteers to help them stay safe. Will also conduct risk assessments and develop safety plans for all activities.

Damage to storage structures	High	Medium	Pre-position relief supplies and equipment, fortify response facilities and establish alternative communication channels to ensure continuity of operations.
Continued challenges with communication with affected areas	Medium	Medium	Set up redundant communication systems, including satellite phones and radio networks. Train responders on effective communication protocols. - Satellite phones together with training were provided on loan to VRCS by New Zealand Red Cross to improve the communications
Water-related diseases outbreak	Medium	High	Ensure access to clean water and sanitation facilities. Promote hygiene practices and disease prevention measures to mitigate health risks.
Coordinating with local authorities	Medium	Low	Collaborate closely with local authorities to align response efforts and leverage local knowledge and resources.
Security risks	Low	Medium	Assess and address security concerns for responders and affected populations. Work with local authorities and security forces to maintain a safe operating environment.
Cultural and language barriers	Medium	Low	Employ local staff and volunteers who are familiar with the culture and language of affected communities.
Continuing vulnerabilities for affected populations due to overlapping disasters	Medium	Medium	Develop long-term recovery and rehabilitation plans to address the needs of affected communities after the initial response phase.
Safeguarding/Gender-based Violence (GBV), Child Protection & Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)	Low	High	Staff and volunteers will receive refresher training and briefings prior to field deployment. Continuous messaging will be undertaken on ethical and compliance behaviors. Referral and reporting lines will be disseminated.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Update on the strategy

An updated Operational Strategy will be issued in the next few weeks considering the latest situation and evolving needs and gaps on the ground, including funding realities for the overall operation.

VRCS will prioritize multipurpose cash assistance to the most affected households (please see the CVA specific update in the detailed section on Multipurpose Cash), the rehabilitation of rainwater harvesting and other WASH solutions,

as well as further investments into health programming and preparedness/replenishment of stocks are also considered priorities. VRCS is in the process of finalizing an agreement with UNICEF to complete Health activities and map out referrals in the affected areas.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

STRATEGIC SECTORS OF INTERVENTION

	Shelter, Housing and Settlements	People Reached:	14,605
		Female > 18: TBC	Female < 18: TBC
		Male > 18: TBC	Male < 18: TBC
Objective:	<i>Communities in disaster and crisis affected areas restore and strengthen their safety, wellbeing and longer-term recovery through shelter and settlement solutions</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># of people provided with basic and safe emergency shelter that adequately enables essential household and livelihood activities to be undertaken with dignity.</i>	14,605	30,000
	<i># of people provided with household items that support the restoration and maintenance of health, dignity and safety and the undertaking of daily domestic activities in and around the home.</i>	9,240	30,000
	<i># of staff and volunteers who completed training in emergency shelter and emergency household items.</i>	6	10
	<i># of people who attended training/awareness raising sessions on transitional safe shelter.</i>	0	400

The VRCS has undertaken an extensive operation to support families affected in various provinces. All emergency shelter and essential household items from the VRCS warehouse in Port Vila were shipped to allocated areas of response (Pentecost in Penama Province, Merelava in Torba Province and Ambryn and Southeast Malekula in Malampa Province) and have been already distributed to affected families.

Even though distributions of emergency shelter and essential household items have been completed in the targeted provinces, there is still an urgent need to support these families and the affected communities in general, with more detailed Build Back safer techniques orientation and awareness, to ensure that the houses re-build are safe and strong enough, and that people are not exposed to higher risks than before, especially considering the ongoing cyclone season.


Damage and needs assessments were done simultaneously with distributions when the availability of stock allowed it. Furthermore, assessments reflect PGI considerations, disaggregated data collected and inform the identification of the most at-risk population to be prioritized in the distributions.

VRCS volunteers disseminate safe shelter and key messages on how to use the shelter kits and Build Back safer to the targeted communities prior to every distribution. Volunteers also support the people who need help to bring the shelter kits to their home. In addition, work is ongoing to make sure that these families are also supported to use the shelter kits.

VRCS Shelter Focal person conducted refresher on the use of Emergency Shelter kit, safe shelter awareness and key messages on Build Back safer with 6 volunteers, prior to their deployment to affected areas.

On procurement matters, emergency shelter assistance for 2,000HH has been procured, which will partially replenish the VRCS stock. However, the expected arrival in Vanuatu is not confirmed yet.


Coordination wise, VRCS actively participated in the 9 Shelter cluster meetings convened since the start of the operation and coordinated with all partners to identify and cover the needs of affected population.

 Livelihoods	People reached:	0
	Female > 18: 0	Female < 18: 0
	Male > 18: 0	Male < 18: 0

Objective: *Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas, restore and strengthen their livelihoods*

Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># of people reached during assessment and beneficiary selection</i>	0	10,000
	<i># of market assessment done</i>	0	1
	<i># of people who successfully received cash for basic needs.</i>	0	2,000
	<i># of post-distribution monitoring conducted</i>	0	1

Based on evolving needs, VRCS has deprioritized the originally planned livelihoods assistance activities and is now focusing on meeting the basic needs of affected people through multipurpose cash grant assistance.

 Multi-purpose Cash	People reached:	0
	Female > 18:0	Female < 18: 0
	Male > 18: 0	Male < 18: 0

Objective: Households are provided with unconditional multipurpose cash grants to address their basic needs while restore / strengthen their livelihoods with particular emphasis on targeting people with disabilities and other marginalised groups in cash and Voucher distributions


Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
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As the assessment was being carried out alongside the coordination with external stakeholders, the provision of assistance through CVA modality is seen as pertinent and viable to support affected people meet their basic needs and potentially linked to early recovery effort. The tentative CVA strategy would be to provide one-off multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) with a transfer value of VUV 20,000 (approx. CHF 150) which equals to 40 per cent of latest Vanuatu minimum monthly wages. MPCA would also aim to protect vulnerable households' livelihood against adopting negative coping mechanism (such as sale of productive assets, involvement of children in labour work, school dropout, etc.) while allowing affected people in meeting their basic essential needs for food and non-food.

VRCS will use DIGICEL with its My Cash e-wallet platform as delivery mechanism. This is a continuation of partnership upon successful completion of Cash distribution to 1,086 HHs in November 2023 for TC Judy and Kevin operation in Shefa island. VRCS with support from IFRC CCD Pacific will extend the corporate agreement supported with vendor performance analysis for DIGICEL. The extension will be for the period of six months from January to June 2024. A longer-term framework agreement is being sought with other Financial Service Providers (FSPs) once the FSP mapping is made available to allow utilization of the most suitable delivery mechanism in specific location in Vanuatu.

The indicators that will measure the achievement of MPCA for this operation are as follows and will be captured through activities such as exit survey and/or Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM), etc.:

- Number of households who received cash assistance
- Number and % of targeted households that have not sold any asset/property (specify type of assets/property sold).
- Percentage of households who report being able to meet the basic needs of their households, according to their priorities (Minimum Expenditure Basket).
- Percentage of beneficiaries reporting that humanitarian assistance is delivered in a safe, respectful, accessible, accountable, and participatory manner.

 Health & Care <i>(Mental Health and psychosocial support / Community Health / Medical Services)</i>	People reached:	16,180	
	Female > 18: TBC	Female < 18: TBC	
	Male > 18: TBC	Male < 18: TBC	
Objective:	<i>Reduce further harm or injury and support the ongoing health and well-being of affected communities</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># of people reached with initial first aid.</i>	TBC	100
	<i># of staff and volunteers trained on First aid/PFA at HQ and all branches (TOT)</i>	0	400
	<i># of people/communities assisted with PSS kits, awareness, and psychological first aid (PFA)</i>	0	100
	<i># of people reached through awareness on potential post-cyclone, water, food vector-borne diseases.</i>	10,950	30,000
	<i># of people reached through NCD awareness and referral pathways.</i>	0	30,000

# of people reached with mosquito net assistance (long-lasting insecticidal nets) and messaging on prevention measures for vector-borne disease.	5,230	1,680
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During and immediately after the cyclone, volunteers provided first aid, however the figures were not recorded. An example was evacuating a sick elderly person during the cyclone, making sure they were taken care of. During distributions, volunteers provided health awareness to affected communities on relevant Public Health in Emergencies topics, Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), Psychosocial Support (PSS), water- and vector-borne diseases.


VRCS volunteers, deployed to do assessments and distributions, were briefed on Epidemic Control for Volunteers (ECV), MHM, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and the use of IEC materials. They were also briefed on a Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) assessment form. These assessment findings are still pending.

Notably, 1,046 mosquito nets were distributed to the affected population. VRCS is coordinating with the Ministry of Health department of Malaria to receive 1,280 more nets for distribution bilaterally – planned still for November.

Six volunteers and 22 staff were trained on basic First Aid at the VRCS headquarters during the operation. However, the training was organized as part of another ongoing project, so the figures are not directly reported here. In addition, five VRCS volunteers and three staff were trained on nutrition assessments and social behavioral change by UNICEF bilaterally.

The Vanuatu Health cluster met once during this reporting period. Several meetings were also held with VRCS, IFRC and UNICEF in regard to nutritional assessments. VRCS received the assessment tool from UNICEF to carry out the assessment. VRCS is coordinating with UNICEF to check and complement the health and WASH IEC material contents.

Additionally, three VRCS staff members are attending PFA ToT as part of another project. This will benefit the TC Lola operation as the staff plan to disseminate the learnings to the volunteers. Further funding is needed to enable VRCS to organize health trainings for volunteers and communities and to replenish the first aid kits.

 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	People Reached:	5,700
	Female > 18: TBC	Female < 18: TBC
	Male > 18: TBC	Male < 18: TBC

Objective: *To restore access to WASH facilities to reduce water-related diseases in affected communities.*

Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># of volunteers and staff trained on WASH in emergencies and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), Hygiene IEC, use of kit, and Hygiene promotion</i>	72	400
	<i># of people received hygiene and MHM kits to support good hygiene practices and the specific needs of girls and women affected by the disaster.</i>	5,700	30,000
	<i># of handwashing stations constructed.</i>	0	TBC

# of people reached through clean-up campaigns to reduce mosquito breeding sites and vector-borne diseases.	0	30,000
# of VIP toilets constructed.	0	TBC
# of water points rehabilitated (well with pumps, spring protection, community ponds with filtration)	0	TBC

VRCS assessments encompass questions on water source contamination, including the source of the water, any damage or impact on it, adequacy of water supply, individuals responsible for bringing the water home and those lacking access to water.

Hygiene kits were distributed to 1,140 households (estimated to benefit 5,700 people). The kit is for a household of five persons and included body soaps (12x100g), laundry soap (5x200g), sanitary pads disposable (40 pads), bath towel (2 pieces), face towel (3 pieces), toilet paper (6 rolls), toothbrush (5 pieces) and toothpaste (2 tubes), razor disposable (4 pieces). However, the current funding was insufficient to procure separate full MHM kits. Instead, some menstrual hygiene pads were included in the household hygiene kits.


VRCS coordinated with UNICEF and received 500 buckets (20 liters capacity) with screw taps and 500 hygiene kits to be distributed in South-East Malekula. These are waiting for shipment from the capital to Malekula.

During assessments and distributions, volunteers raised awareness on handwashing and Health and WASH messages using IEC materials.

Staff and volunteers deployed across different areas received briefing on WASH key messaging. This includes 6 volunteers and 2 staff in Torba, 15 volunteers in Sanma, 11 volunteers and 1 staff in Malakula, 6 volunteers and 2 staff in HQ/Shefa, and 28 volunteers and 3 staff in Pentecost.

The VRCS WASH officer continues to attend the WASH Cluster meetings, while IFRC CCD WASH counterpart continues to support VRCS remotely with WASH activities for the TC Lola response.

Critical infrastructural necessities like toilet constructions, handwashing stations and water point rehabilitations are very much needed. However, current funding does not allow VRCS to engage in these activities.

 Protection, Gender and Inclusion	People reached:	8,555	
	Female > 18: TBC	Female < 18: TBC	
	Male > 18: TBC	Male < 18: TBC	
Objective:	<i>Communities identify the needs of the most at risk and particularly disadvantaged and marginalized groups, due to inequality, discrimination and other non-respect of their human rights and address their distinct needs</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	# of RCRC staff and volunteers trained on PGI	72	400
	# of people reached by PGI interventions	8,555	30,000
PGI awareness continued throughout the distribution activities, ensuring dissemination of crucial information to			

affected communities.

Ground assessments also captured disaggregated data, unveiling critical insights into affected communities' demographics, including:

- 342 males and 414 females living with disability.
- 701 women living as single parents.
- 120 pregnant mothers, 501 breastfeeding women and 701 women living as single parents.

A total of 1,695 hygiene kits that were distributed (under WASH) included MHM pads for women to address women and girl's needs. However, due to budgetary limitations, the operation was not yet able to procure and distribute dignity kits. These would be highly relevant and affected people have mentioned the need for these.

In terms of coordination efforts, VRCS PGI officer remained actively engaged by attending the Vanuatu Gender Protection Cluster meetings, ensuring consistent collaboration within the humanitarian network. Additionally, VRCS successfully completed the IFRC Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment.



Community Engagement and Accountability

People reached:	TBC
Female > 18: TBC	Female < 18: TBC
Male > 18: TBC	Male < 18: TBC

Objective: *A robust, two-way communication system is established to actively engage and integrate the needs, preferences, and feedback of affected communities, fostering trust, ownership, and resilience while upholding accountability, dignity, and respect.*


Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>Operational decisions or changes made based on community feedback</i>	Ongoing	Yes
	<i># (and %) of complaints or feedback about the RCRC operation that receive a response through established community communication</i>	10 (100% responded to)	As received

As of reporting period, the VRCS household assessments have reached 14,665 people in 2,190 households. These assessments have informed VRCS beneficiary selection for distributions. During assessments and distributions, volunteers encouraged and reminded communities to utilize the Red Cross hotline number to raise any feedback, questions, or concerns. The hotline is attended to at VRCS HQ and has received up to 10 calls so far concerning distribution criteria and geographical locations of targeting and distributions.


Callers have also sought for the information of a VRCS contact person in their vicinity. VRCS HQ staff/volunteers have been able to provide the answers and information sought by the callers. Beside the hotline, communities' approach VRCS staff and volunteers directly and more informally with their questions and concerns in the field directly as well as via phone. These are not recorded but attended to in person/directly.

Furthermore, community members in their communications highlight their concerns for shelter, food security, safe water, and those in the evacuation shelters have raised concerns about gender-based violence and child

protection. Similarly, community feedback was received in VRCS HQ concerning community targeting and helped the HQ to guide the field distribution team in targeting.

 Risk Reduction, climate adaptation and Recovery	People reached:	0	
	Female > 18: 0	Female < 18: 0	
	Male > 18: 0	Male < 18: 0	
Objective:	<i>VRCS disaster response capacity has been improved</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i># of warehouse construction in the Northern Province and pre-stocking</i>	0	1
<p>Activities under this section would be essential for recovery, resilience and preparedness for the next hazards. The activities are pending further funding.</p>			

Enabling approaches

 National Society Strengthening	Objective:		
	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>VRCS has successfully articulated short-term emergency and National Society Development (NSD) objectives together with long-term NSD objectives.</i>	No	Yes
Key indicators:	<i>VRCS has identified learning mechanisms to assess the impact of the operation.</i>	No	Yes
	<i>% of volunteers involved in the operation insured</i>	100%	100%
	<p>Volunteer & and staff protection and motivation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop security and safety procedures - and training - for volunteers and staff; Provide staff and volunteers with the safety equipment they need to do their work: This activity would be highly important. A safety incident occurred during the reporting period involving a VRCS volunteer at sea. The current implementing budget includes the procurement of safety items for volunteers. The procurement is still in process. More would be needed as well as training and procedures development. • Renew volunteer accident insurance for 2024: Budgeted in the current implementation budget and in process. 		

Finance, procurement, logistics

- HQ and branches are trained in financial reporting to develop consolidated financial statements: IFRC CCD Suva finance officer is in close contact with VRCS finance officer to prepare the budgets for the operation and to support reporting. IFRC CCD Suva finance officer support mission to Vanuatu is budgeted in the current implementation budget and can be geared toward this goal.
- Procurement, logistics, warehousing, and fleet management guidelines and training are developed: IFRC CCD Logistics Officer was in Vanuatu at the beginning of the operation in October-early November to support VRCS logistics officer. Wider development activities will be linked with warehouse construction, which is pending funding and currently not in the implementation budget.

Branch development

- Refurbishment of branch infrastructure: currently not in the implementation budget, pending funding.
- Develop a Preparedness for effective response (PER) assessment: currently not in the implementation budget, pending funding.



Coordination and Partnerships

Objective:	<i>Develop an efficient and coordinated approach with all stakeholders involved</i>		
Key indicators:	Indicator	Actual	Target
	<i>Regular coordination mechanism is in place ensuring alignment and coordination with all Movement partners</i>	Yes	Yes

Membership coordination:

- Consolidate and harmonize multilateral and bilateral support provided to VRCS through a Federation-wide approach: New Zealand Red Cross provided bilateral support to VRCS by providing four satellite phones and connections for loan for 3 months to improve communication between VRCS HQ and branches in the affected islands. The support was coordinated with the IFRC EA.
- Apply Federation-wide planning, monitoring, and reporting with VRCS in the lead and coordinated by the IFRC: Setting up reporting systems with VRCS is ongoing with IFRC CCD support, using the systems created for TC Judy/Kevin DREF operation as a starting point.
- Ensure regular coordination within the IFRC Network: IFRC CCD Suva management engaged in ongoing bilateral discussions with key partners in the Pacific to secure and facilitate financial and technical support to VRCS. IFRC APRO organized a Partners Call following the EA publication allowing VRCS to speak to the IFRC Network globally to secure support. An external Partners Call is planned for early 2024.

Engagement with external partners:

- Support VRCS to participate in regular coordination meetings with National leads, UN OCHA, and other humanitarian partners: IFRC delegates deployed in Vanuatu have been taking active part in twice weekly Inter Agency coordination meetings organized by NDMO, representing alongside VRCS when possible. IFRC Shelter Coordinator supported VRCS Shelter Officer in co-leading the Shelter Cluster and convening weekly meetings of the Cluster. VRCS and IFRC Shelter Coordinator represented the Shelter Cluster also in the weekly National Inter-Cluster Coordination meetings. IFRC Shelter Cluster Coordinator surge delegate ensures the continuation of support to VRCS, external partners and National authorities.

Movement cooperation:

- Maintain coordination with ICRC and engage in case restoring family links (RFL) activities requested by VRCS: ICRC has shared RFL guidance with VRCS.
- Safer Access training for volunteers and staff: Not planned for the moment.



Shelter Cluster Coordination

Objective: *Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements are well coordinated, supporting a comprehensive, quality, coherent, and consistent. Shelter and Settlements response co-led by VRCS with support from IFRC.*

	Indicator	Actual	Target
Key indicators:	<i>Shelter cluster response strategy in place and agreed by the shelter cluster members, informing the National response plan.</i>	Yes	Yes
	<i>Information management system in place capturing potential gaps and duplication of efforts and monitoring progress in the implementation of the shelter cluster strategy.</i>	Yes	Yes
	<i>Technical guidance and standards for response in place and agreed by the shelter cluster members.</i>	No	Yes
	<i># of regular coordination meetings taking place during response phase, providing a platform for coordination to humanitarian shelter members</i>	9	10
	<i># of regular coordination meetings taking place during early recovery phase and preparedness, providing a platform for coordination to humanitarian shelter partners</i>	0	6
	<i># of partners regularly participating in shelter cluster/sector activities</i>	8	10

Based on evolving situation, some changes to the list of indicators under this section has been made. The indicators above were not included in the initial OS and OU#1. They have been adapted for this operation from the suggested ones by Global Shelter Cluster Coordination in Geneva. Below are some of the key actions under this sector:

(a) Support the delivery of Shelter and Settlements assistance; Provide a platform to ensure that the response is driven by the agreed priorities; develop mechanisms to eliminate duplication and gaps:

- One Shelter Cluster Coordinator surge support deployed for three months.
- VRCS shelter cluster coordinator, with the support of IFRC Pacific shelter coordinator, convened and led nine shelter cluster meetings with the participation of implementing agencies, donors, and partners, facilitating coordination, analysis of damages and needs in the affected areas, estimated coverage of assistance to HH in need of shelter and gaps.

- Standards for distribution, prioritization of most affected communities and distribution plans were agreed during the cluster meetings, considering the scarcity of stock in country,
- Supported and built capacity of NDMO shelter cluster lead in coordination of the response, advocating and trying to ensure that humanitarian principles are followed.
- Advocated for clear communication and accountability to affected communities is kept along the national response. Especially in the current context of scarcity of stocks in country, facilitated official communication from NEOC to PEOC and area administrators.
- IM: Established appropriate tools to track and monitor the implementation of the response, identifying and addressing potential gaps and duplications.
- IM: Revised and input into the 5W provided by NDMO IM, with support OCHA IM, to facilitate the shelter cluster reporting and analysis.
- IM: Elaborate maps and infographics to show the progress of the response, with the support of Global Shelter Cluster IM support team.

(b) Kept continuous coordination and dialogue with the Displacement and Evacuation Center Management cluster coordination team, to ensure adequate provision of emergency shelter assistance and essential HH items to displaced population living with host families and in evacuation centers.

(c) Inform strategic decision-making for the humanitarian response: Needs assessment and response gap analysis for Shelter and Settlements; analysis to identify and address emerging gaps, obstacles, duplication, and cross-cutting issues; prioritization, grounded in response analysis. This includes the shelter cluster response plan, which will be included in the National Response Plan that will be endorsed by the National Council of Ministers.

- Coordinated with all partners and elaborated the Shelter Cluster Response plan included in the endorsed National Response plan.
- Revised damage and needs estimations reflected in the national response plan according to government assessment data released and update the gaps to inform the response.

(d) Planning and development of strategy: Develop a strategy, plans, objectives and indicators for the shelter and settlements sectors:

- Contribution to the Shelter and settlement sector for National Early Recovery Plan, agreed with cluster members.
- Ongoing joint revision with NDMO of SOP for post-disaster damage and needs Assessments, including assessment forms for community and Area Council level.

(e) Monitoring and reporting on implementation of the shelter cluster strategy and results; recommending corrective action where necessary.

(f) Contingency planning/preparedness/capacity building, considering the cyclone season in Vanuatu has just started and is expected to be intense. (Cyclone Lola hit 'pre-season'.)

- Ongoing conversations with shelter cluster members for preparedness planning, including definition of area of coverage and activities by agency, estimated need for stockholding at country level.



**Secretariat
Services**

Objective:

Indicator

Actual

Target

Key indicators:	<i># of rapid-response members deployed for the operation.</i>	1	2
	<i>The logistics department provides constant support to VRCS logistics unit for replenishment and other procurement</i>	Ongoing	Yes
	<i># of evaluations conducted for this operation</i>	0	1

Coordination and management support:

- Disaster Risk Management Delegate from IFRC CCD Suva was deployed as interim operation manager for two months to support VRCS with the initial emergency phase, supported by Canadian Red Cross. Surge Operation Manager was alerted through IFRC APRO Rapid Response mechanism and will be engaged with the operation from January 2024 for a period of three months.

Thematic and technical support:

- IFRC CCD Suva and APRO thematic coordinators – Shelter, Health, WASH, CVA, PGI, CEA, NSD, PMER – provided ongoing technical support to their VRCS counterparts to develop the Operational Strategy and for quality planning of activities.
- IFRC CCD Suva finance, admin and HR teams facilitated the overall finance structure for the operation and international funds transfers, as well as incoming HR travel support. IFRC CCD Shelter Coordinator was deployed at the start of operation for two weeks to support VRCS Shelter and settlements Program and VRCS Shelter Cluster coordination, in support of the NDMO as lead of Shelter Cluster.
- IFRC Shelter Cluster Coordinator Surge support deployed for three months to ensure effective coordination with all cluster members for the ongoing response and elaborate and discuss contingency plans for the ongoing cyclone season.

D. FUNDING

The current income of the operation is composed of the CHF 750,000 DREF loan and CHF 571,991 in hard and soft pledges, totalling CHF 1,321,991 of cash support to the operation. In terms of expenditure, VRCS has spent already close to CHF 180,000 on distribution and activity costs to date and close to CHF 440,000 have been committed to the procurement of replenishment shelter and household items. An external donor meeting is to be planned in the coming weeks.

IFRC Secretariat Coverage	Amount Raised (CHF)	Funding Gap (CHF)	Coverage %
Hard Pledges + In kind + Soft Pledges	571,991	1,928,009	23%
Federation-wide Coverage	Amount Raised (CHF)	Funding Gap (CHF)	Coverage %
IFRC Secretariat + Bilateral	582,791	2,117,209	22%

Contact information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

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For In-Kind Donations and Mobilisation table support:

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For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

- Mursidi Unir, PMER in Emergencies Coordinator; email mursidi.unir@ifrc.org

Reference documents



Click here for:

- [Previous Appeals and updates](#)
- [Operation Strategy TC Lola- Vanuatu](#)

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief, the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable, to **Principles of Humanitarian Action** and **IFRC policies and procedures**. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.